

An Earnest and Pressing 9
C A L L,
To Keep HOLY the
LORD'S DAY.

Addressed equally to the Rich and Poor of his Flock:

WITH SUITABLE
D I R E C T I O N S,
To be observed for that Purpose.

By H. VENN, A.M.
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late Fellow of *Queen's-College, Cambridge.*

**And my Sabbaths they greatly polluted; then
I said, I would pour out my Fury upon them.**

EZEK. XX. 13.

L E E D E S :
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An earnest and pressing CALL, &c.

‘ *It* is a melancholy Reflection, (Mr. ADDISON observes,) that our Country, which in Times of Popery was called, the Nation of Saints, should now have less Appearance of Religion in it, than any other neighbouring State or Kingdom ; whether they be such as continue still immersed in the Errors of the Church of Rome, or such as are recovered out of them.’

FREEHOLDER, No. 49.

THIS was his Observation, less than fifty Years ago. Since which Time, the Scorn of GOD, is become flagrant and avowed. His Sabbaths, without either Remorse or Disguise, are spent in Worldly Business or Pleasure ; as if there was neither Law of GOD, nor Man enjoining us to keep them Holy. Every Newspaper almost, publishes throughout our Land, the wanton Contempt, People in High Life pour upon it ; by choosing to travel, on a Day wholly devoted to GOD. And, proud to copy the Great, and, at the same Time, gratify their own profane Humour, few amongst the Trading and Laborious Part of the World, refuse to work, to buy, or sell ; to post their Books, or to seek Recreations on the Sabbath.

SUCH a Profanation of the Day, is an Offence, including much more of Sinfulness, than those, who are guilty of it, I am persuaded, apprehend. Ignorance, and a blind Conformity to general Custom, extenuate,

and hide, (I know from former Experience,) the Evil, there really is, in such a Practice.

I KNOW no better Service, therefore, I could engage in, than to lay before you all, whose Everlasting Salvation, must ever be the Desire of my Heart, and the Thing that I long for,

- I. What GOD expects from us on his own Sabbaths.
- II. The End and Design for which He appointed them.
- III. The various ill Consequences of Polluting them.
- IV. The peculiar Aggravations, which prove the great Wickedness of ever daring to pollute them.

THO' you have heard each of these Points proved from the Pulpit, I now send those Proofs to you, my beloved Flock, in Print also. I send them to you, in this Manner, that you may more closely, and more frequently, ponder on the important Duty of Keeping Holy the Lord's Day; that nothing may be lost on this Subject, thro' the Treachery of your Memories; nor any one Householder, within my Charge, whether rich or poor, be able to say, they have wanted the most solemn and affectionate Warning, to beware of breaking the Sabbaths of the Lord.

MAY the Whole be accompanied with such a Divine Blessing, that all Contempt of GOD's Word and Commandment, may cease amongst us; and every Sabbath be accepted by us all, to the End for which it is given, as a Sign whereby we might know, that it is the Lord our GOD that doth sanctify us.

I.

WHAT you must do, to keep the Lord's Day according to his Will, you may learn from many plain Declarations in the Bible: But one of them, the 58th Chapter of Isaiah, and Verse 13, gives you a full

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full and complete Account of this Matter. For, in this Place, you hear the Eternal GOD, teaching the rebellious Children of Israel, what Method they must take to regain His forfeited Favour. With respect to the Sabbath, He gives them this Command.

If Thou shalt turn away thy Foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy Pleasure on my Holy Day, and call the Sabbath, a Delight, the Holy of the Lord, Honourable; and shalt honour him; not doing thy own Ways; nor finding thy own Pleasure; nor speaking thy own Words: Then, shalt Thou delight Thyself in the Lord; and I will cause Thee to ride upon the High Places of the Earth, and feed Thee with the Heritage of Jacob Thy Father; for the Mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.

IN this Passage, you hear, the LORD, the LORD GOD Himself, your Maker, Preserver, and Judge, declaring most plainly, both what you must not do; and what you must do, in order to keep Holy his Sabbaths.

You must not do your own Ways.] You must not exercise your Trade; you must not buy nor sell, nor transact any Business to get Gain; as Covetousness, and the Love of Money, will strongly incline you to do.

You must not find your own Pleasure.] Not make the Sabbath a Day for bodily Recreation and Amusement; nor employ it in paying or receiving Visits.

Nor speak your own Words.] Not hold Discourse, and have your Mind engaged about those Things of the World, which your Business obliges you to attend to, and speak of, on common Days.

THUS, what must not be done by you on the Sabbath, is most clearly taught.

IN the next Place, what you must do, is as fully expressed. *You must call the Sabbath a Delight.* Many who do not openly profane the Day, by buying or selling, or taking Recreation, are weary of it, say, When will it

it be gone ? They think it a long and tedious Time, to be restrained from their usual Pastimes, or their gainful Trade : But the Sabbath must be your Delight ; you must rejoice in it, as a most gracious Opportunity afforded to you, thro' the great Mercy and Love of GOD, of praying to, and publickly praising Him, whom all the Host of Heaven, esteem it their highest Honour to Worship.

You must account *the Sabbath, Holy of the Lord*. No politic Device of Man to keep the Vulgar in Awe, and make them honest : but set apart by the Lord Himself, for this great and holy Purpose, of giving Glory to GOD, as the Creator of all Things, the Preserver and Judge of all Men.

You must account *the Sabbath, Honourable*. An inestimable Privilege ; a Day, raised and ennobled, far above all common Days, by the religious Exercises, in which it is to be employed.

LASTLY, You must *Honour Him*. You must, in direct contradiction to all the ungodly World, and all the profane Customs of Men, give yourself, this Day, to secret and public Prayer, and bear open Testimony, that you believe and are persuaded, that GOD alone is to be feared, and loved, above all Things.

SUCH high Thoughts doth the Lord Almighty require you, to have of his Sabbaths ; thus to renounce, on those Days, all worldly Business, all low-thoughted Discourse, and to be diligent in reading, or hearing the Bible, in Meditation on the Things of GOD, and in Prayer.

IF you ask now, For what End, and with what Design, doth the Lord require from you, so devout an Observation of his Sabbaths ? It is, that you may obtain the Knowledge of the True GOD, and of JESUS CHRIST, whom He hath sent, which is Eternal Life. Six Days you are commanded to labour in

in your Calling. And if at proper Intervals, such as every Seventh Day, there was no Opportunity for Instruction in Righteousness, you must live and die as grossly ignorant of your own Condition, of GOD and CHRIST, and every Thing of a Spiritual Nature, as you was born. You, and all around you, would be altogether earthly and sensual.

BUT, think now for a Moment. Were we endued with a reasonable Understanding, that we might live as ignorant of GOD, as the Horse or the Mule? Are we made capable of knowing GOD and his Truth, and accountable to Him, whilst yet no Regard is to be paid, to this distinguished Difference, between us and Brutes? Certainly you must and do say, this ought not to be the Case. Lest it should be, GOD Himself, the one Law-giver, able to save and to destroy, hath commanded us to remember his Sabbath, and keep it Holy. He has commanded every Man, on that Day, as diligently to use the Means of getting and increasing the Knowledge of GOD, as on common Days he uses Diligence and Labour in his Work and Calling. And such Care hath the GOD of all Grace taken; and such abundant Provision hath He made, that no Man, who duly observes this Day, shall want any necessary Knowledge, either of Himself, of GOD, or the Way of Salvation.

FOR, when in Obedience to the plain Command of GOD, the Sabbath is begun with Private Prayer, in order to dispose the Heart, to worship GOD aright in the great Congregation: When a Man comes in the Presence of his Neighbours, and in the Church of GOD, with bended Knees and humble Heart, to acknowledge the Evil of his Doings, and the Wages of Sin: When he joins with them sincerely in calling upon GOD for Mercy, only on account of the Blood shed by JESUS on the Cross, and hopes to receive it thro' his Intercession: By this Means, a Man, who before did but faintly, if at all, perceive, the defiling, damnable

able Nature of Sin, will most effectually be taught, how exceeding sinful it is ; and understand, why the Son of GOD must needs suffer in our stead, lest we all should perish everlastingly, for our Transgression.

AGAIN. A Man, who thro' the Ignorance that is in him, would never raise his Mind to one affecting Conception of the Majesty and Glory of GOD, when he joins with Numbers of his Fellow-Creatures, in a hearty and open Confession, that His is *the Kingdom, the Power, and the Glory* ; that from Him, proceed all holy Thoughts, all good Desires, and all just Works. Every Man, duly engag'd in such an Assembly, must be affected with this Exercise of his Mind ; and feel his Spirit impressed with strong and lively Conceptions, that GOD is worthy to be feared, obeyed, and loved, in the highest Degree.

FURTHER. The Mind of Man, which is naturally anxious ; and devoured by tormenting Fears of Want, especially in low and strait Circumstances, will be taught the All-sufficiency of GOD to provide for them that fear Him : When every Week, you join a large Assembly, to spread all your Wants before Him, and to acknowledge, that those that fear the Lord, shall want no manner of Thing that is good. Nor can his tender Mercy be questioned by the Man, who with Reverence and Sincerity, goes every Sabbath with the Multitude, on Purpose to give unto GOD his Thanks and Praise, for our Creation, Preservation, and above all, for our Redemption, by JESUS CHRIST, both GOD and Man, who did humble Himself, even to the Death of the Cross, for us, miserable Sinners.

AND, to conclude this Point. No Man can be ignorant how *certainly* he is bringing Ruin and Damnation on Himself, by continuing in the Practice of any Sin, whether it be Dishonesty, Lying, Drunkenness or Lewdness ; who every Sabbath hears in the House of
GOD,

GOD, his Word read, without any Comment of Man's devising, which reveals the Wrath of GOD against all such presumptuous Sinners.

FROM what has been said, it is evident, that by attending the Church-Service, at least, where it is scriptural and truly Christian, (as is the happy Case with respect to us of the Establishment,) the Understanding will be enlightened, and the Heart made better. Every Attribute and Perfection of GOD will be understood; and the most ignorant of the Poor, taught, even by their Senses, what manner of Obedience and Love, they are bound to pay to Almighty GOD.

ADD to this, that GOD hath ordained Pastors and Teachers, to open and enforce the Life-giving Oracles of GOD. And where the Priests of the Lord are cloathed with Righteousness; *where, they stand in the Counsel of the Lord, and speak his Words*, the unchangeable Promise of GOD, is, *then they shall turn the People from their Evil Ways, and from the Evil of their Doings.* JER. xxiii. 22.

FOR these gracious Purposes, equally conducive to the Glory of GOD, the Good of the Soul, and the Benefit of Mankind, in this World, as well as in that which is to come, doth the Almighty GOD in the most solemn and peremptory Manner, command, saying, *Ye shall keep my Sabbaths, and reverence my Sanctuary.* LEV. xxvi. 2.

Now, if this Command is despised; if the Sabbath is consumed in Vanity, or taken up, like another Day, in worldly Business; then, most melancholy and dreadful are the certain Consequences of such a Practice. By this Sin, you will be kept out of the Way of GOD's Blessing; you will be shut up in Ignorance; you will, and must be, left under the Dominion of vile and abominable Lusts; for GOD hath said, *In all Places where I record My Name, there will I come unto Thee, and I will bless Thee.* EXOD. xx. 24.

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BUT,

BUT, if you absent yourself from such Places, you provoke GOD to curse you; and you reject the very Means, in the Use of which, Deliverance from the Power of vile Affections is to be received, and that Knowledge, which alone can make Sin detested, gained by you.

To profane the Sabbath, if you have Children or Servants, is to breed them up in Atheism; to strengthen all their natural Depravity, and teach them most horribly to imagine, that GOD careth not what Thoughts Men have of Himself, nor is a Rewarder of those, who diligently seek Him.

OTHER Sins, are a Denial of certain Branches of Duty; but, breaking the Sabbath, is directly levelled against the Object of all Duty. Other Sins, are so many Attacks against different Parts of GOD's Law; but, breaking the Sabbath, saps the Foundation, and undermines the Whole. Other Sins, shew a Want of Regard to the Authority of GOD; but, breaking the Sabbath, is a loud, open, immediate Insult upon His Majesty, as Lord of the whole Earth.

HENCE you find, that this Sin of Profaneness, stands at the Beginning of the most profligate and abandoned Life; that Thieves, and Robbers, and Murderers confess, they were first avowed and incorrigible Profaners of the Lord's Day.

HENCE it is, that this Sin is so strongly marked in the Bible, as provoking the Furioufness of GOD's Wrath; and, that the *first* Sabbath-Breaker in the Jewish Camp, who dared to despise the Lord's Sabbath, (by doing on that Day what he had Time enough to do before,) was, by Divine Command, punished as a Blasphemer of GOD Himself, and stoned to Death.

NUMB. XV. 32.

THIS Judgment and Vengeance of GOD, against the Profaner of His Holy Day, is written for our Learning. And tho' Patience and Forbearance is now,
for

for Year after Year, shewn to such presumptuous Offenders; and GOD endures, for a long Time, the Vessels fitted for Destruction; yet, the Scripture must be fulfilled, *The Wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the People that forget GOD.* PSAL. ix. 17.

L A Y, therefore, these Things together, and consider how inexcusable, O Man, thou art, who, upon any Plea, but that of shewing Mercy, or saving Life; of doing or receiving spiritual Good, dost seem to slight the Sabbaths of the L O R D.

T O convince you still more deeply, of the Evil of Sabbath-breaking, and to prove it is a Sin of a Crimson Dye, tho' generally accounted so small an Offence; I will proceed to shew you, the peculiar Aggravations of this Sin.

1. I T is a most barefaced Contempt of the Majesty of GOD; for his Will in this Matter, is so plainly declared in our Church-Service; so constantly published from Week to Week; nay, enforced even by the Law of our Land, that no Man whatsoever can plead *Ignorance*. And the Necessity of keeping the Sabbath Holy, if Men are not to be left in gross and savage Ignorance of themselves, their GOD, and Salvation, is so evident, that none can deny it. The evil Consequences, which arise from despising the Sabbath, are certain and dreadful; the begetting and spreading Atheism amongst Men; and making them diabolical enough, to treat the Great GOD, for whose Glory all Things were made, as if He was beneath our Notice, and the only Cypher in the World.

2. T O break the Sabbath for your own Convenience, Gain, or Pleasure, is an Act of the highest Injustice towards GOD; for you are as much bound to give unto GOD the Things which are GOD's, as to pay your lawful Debts. And when He, who is the Master and Owner of all Things, sets apart any Portion of Time for religious Employment:--when He calls the Seventh Day

Day *His own* ; *His Sabbath* : when He declares He has hallowed and blessed it. To take any Part of this Day ; to pervert it from its original Use ; to consume it in a Way directly opposite to its Appointment ; is in the Eye of Reason and GOD's Law, as truly to defraud GOD of his Due, as withholding by Injustice and Force the Property of your Neighbour, is to defraud him.

AND that GOD doth really account the going away from his Ordinances, a defrauding him of his just Rights, is evident from his own Testimony ; for thus he urges his Complaint against the profane Jews. *Will a Man rob GOD ?* MAL. iii. 8. If there be any Justice ; any Sense of right or wrong left in the Mind, must not this be an Iniquity utterly detested ? Can any one on this Side of Hell, be so desperately wicked, as knowingly and wilfully to detain, what I have claimed as my own, whose Name is JEALOUS ; who am great in Power, and infinite in Wisdom ? *Yet ye have robbed ME. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed Thee ? In Tithes and Offerings* ; by withholding those Things, which I have reserved to myself, and for my Service.

Now, if the detaining Tithes and Offerings, Things of no moral Obligation, was accounted by GOD, a sacrilegious Theft : How much more the withholding from Him, the Worship due to Him on the Sabbath ; a Duty enjoined before the Ceremonial Law, and subsisting in full force for ever ?

How highly the Almighty resents, and how severely he punishes, such Trespas committed against his Divine Majesty, judge ye from the Words which immediately follow. *Ye are cursed with a Curse, for ye have robbed me ; even this whole Nation.* i. e. The far greater Part of all Ranks and Conditions amongst you ; by their profane Contempt of my Ordinances, appear as void of Justice and Honesty with regard to myself, as a Band of Thieves and Robbers.

3. By Profaning the Sabbath, you shew you are more without any Sense of Religion, tho' favoured with the Light of the glorious Gospel, than the very Heathens, who were in gross Darkness ; and you stand condemned even by their Practice.

Now, tho' you may despise the great Piety of a real Christian, certainly you will not dare to act more impiously than the Heathens were wont to do, even towards those who were no Gods. Yet the Heathens were not so abandoned, as to pay no Tokens of their Dependance on, and Subjection to, those they called their Gods. They frequented their Festivals ; they observed their appointed Seasons for doing Honour to them. Whilst you, on the contrary, who profane the Sabbaths of the LORD ; give no public Sign of any Faith in GOD, the Living GOD, Maker and Governor of all Things. You give no Proof, that you fear his Anger, desire his Favour, or care for his Blessing. To your utter Shame and Confusion, Barbarians from every Part of the World, shall rise up against you, and condemn you : For, they set apart a Time, for worshipping the Gods they trusted in ; but you, tho' baptized into the Name of the Father, Son, and Spirit, and called to the Knowledge of the Grace of GOD, which bringeth Salvation ; you, are so unthankful, and unholy, as to shun his solemn Worship, and abuse the Sabbath, to Purposes of Vanity, or getting Gain.

4. A Profanation of the Sabbath, proves you not only more depraved than the Heathens ; but more insensible and ungrateful, than Brutes. This, perhaps, you think is aggravating the Charge, farther than it will bear ; and loading the Sabbath-Breaker with more Guilt than he deserves : but I will appeal to your own Conscience, for the Truth of it ; and then, confirm it by what the Mouth of the LORD has spoken.

I SAY, then, that the Practice of neglecting GOD's Worship, and profaning his own Holy Day, for the
Sake

Sake of Pleasure, Gain, and Convenience, is worse than brutal Behaviour : For, has not the Brute, which receives the Benefit of your Protection and Care, a strong and grateful Sense of what you do for it ? Your Dog, for Instance ; is it not thankful for what you give it ? Does it not shew this to you by many, and the best Tokens in its Power ? Does it not love, honour, and, as it were, adore its Master ? Does it not wait on you, and for you ? and, after Absence, shew uncommon Signs of Joy, at it's Master's Return ?

IN thus doing, does it not reproach, every profane Despiser of GOD's Sabbath, as much as the Ant reproves the Sluggard ? For where are the Marks of your Thankfulness, to Him who is your Lord, your Creator, Benefactor, and Redeemer ? He is every Moment doing you Good, and yet so despised by you, that you set at naught his plain and peremptory Command. Thus would not your Dog serve you. You eat GOD's Bread ; you wear his Cloaths ; you enjoy his rich Gifts of Health and Strength ; yet hate to come to his House ; where every Man speaks of his Honour. You please your own profane Spirit, on the Day you should be wholly employed in the Exercises of Godliness. If your Dog, whom you feed and caress, was to shew such Contempt for you, you would instantly destroy him, as one sunk below the Excellence of his own Kind.

BUT, to the Brute, [take Knowledge of it,] GOD sends you, O thou profane Person, to learn how full of outrageous Ingratitude, your Behaviour towards Him, appears.

Hear, O Heavens, says He, and give Ear, O Earth, for the Lord hath spoken. I have nourished and brought up Children, and they have rebelled against me. The Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Master's Crib ; but Israel doth not know, my People doth not consider.
ISAIAH i. v. 2, 3.

LASTLY. By that profane Spirit, which leads you to pollute the Sabbath, your Sentiments and Behaviour, with

with respect to GOD, perfectly agree with that of the Devil and his Angels. Your Practice casts a Reproach and Disgrace upon the very Profession of a GOD. For such Profaneness of Practice, plainly speaks this Language. 'I am not under Obligations to any God. 'I am not dependent on any. I have received no Favours from him. I desire no Good at his Hands. 'I fear no Evil that he can inflict. There is no God. 'I know not any.' Language truly Diabolical.

OR, if you will have it, that by profaning the Sabbaths of the LORD, you do not deny the very Being of your Maker; your Practice undeniably says, I will affront Him to his Face. I will shew to all Men I value Him not; and bring as many as possible to be of my Mind. For, if Actions speak the Thoughts of the Heart, as plain as Words, thus does every Profaner of the LORD's Day, speak in the Ears of all that behold him.

AND now I would hope, and fain persuade myself, that if thou, O Reader, hast been, or still art, a Polluter of the Sabbath; what has been said, may have touched your Heart, and produced in you, some Sight and Sense of the great Evil chargeable on thee. O give Way to it. Turn not aside from it, as you love your own Salvation. Dwell upon your Offence and Sin, till you are persuaded, from the very Bottom of your Soul, that you have acted, in profaning the Sabbath, a most wicked, ungrateful, devilish Part towards GOD.

THINK how long GOD has suffered you, hearing the Cry of your horrible Profaneness. Long, too long, have you provoked Him. Fly for Pardon, for all this great Wickedness, to Him, whom you have hitherto despised, no less than the Sabbaths of the LORD; to that CHRIST, who died for the Ungodly; and for whose Sake alone, the Sinner, and the Ungodly can be justified. Fly for Pardon to Him; and tho' utterly unworthy, He will be your Advocate with the Father, and the Propitiation of your Sin.

MAKE

MAKE your Prayer daily, that your Return to GOD may be manifest, by your sanctifying his Sabbaths : By redeeming from Idleness and Vanity ; or from forbidden Toil and Labour, the Holy Hours of the Lord's own Day. Pray, that you may not be deceived by the atheistical Fashion of the Times, to account the profaning the Sabbath, a small and trifling Offence. An Offence, easily to be overlooked, if a Man is sober, humane, merciful and honest. Remember, you cannot prove the Guilt of any Transgression to be more inflamed, than by proving it is a wilful Breach of GOD's Law, a Contempt of his Name, and an atheistical Declaration, that you care not for Him.

REMEMBER, that most sinfully selfish as we are, we resent, and reproach those Sins, only, which annoy and injure us : whilst we have little Dislike to, and no Abhorrence of, those Sins which trample GOD under Foot. If a Servant flies in his Master's Face, and offers Violence to him ; or a Son lifts up his Hand against his Parent, the whole Neighbourhood shall ring with the Crime, and every Heart burn with Indignation. But you may treat GOD with more Impudence, than a rude Servant his Master ; with more unnatural Rebellion, than an undutiful Child his Parent, and no Complaint be raised against you ; no Indignation at your Behaviour. Remember this, and conclude within your Breast, that the Sin of profaning the Sabbath, is not, therefore, the less provoking in the Sight of GOD, because, it is less odious in the Judgment of ungodly Men. The Reasoning of St. JAMES in this Case, is strictly true. *He that keepeth the whole Law, save that he offendeth in one Point, is guilty of all.* The same GOD, who commanded you, not to steal, commit Adultery, or bear false Witness ; said also, *Remember to keep Holy the Sabbath-Day.* Now, if thou commit no Adultery, neither steal, nor cheat, nor lie ; if thou art neither an Extortioner, nor unjust, yet, if thou profanest the Sabbaths of the LORD, thou art become a Transgressor of the Law.

U P O N

UPON every Return, therefore, of the Sabbath, be earnest in Prayer for a Spiritual Frame of Mind ; for a Heart, glad to embrace the Day, as set apart for the more abundant Worship of GOD, and Increase of all Grace to the Souls of Men.



SECOND PART.

IF the Arguments already advanced, are duly considered, the Profanation of the LORD's Day, can no longer appear a small Offence. No Tradesman, Day-labourer, or other Person whatsoever, will think himself any thing better than a most audacious Rebel against GOD, for exercising his ordinary Calling on the LORD's Day. Much less will any Gentleman, who considers the peculiar Aggravations, of the Sin of polluting the Sabbath, set an Example himself of Prophaneness ; or suffer any Persons, to be employed on this Holy Day, where his Influence and Authority can prevent it. This must be the Case, whenever the Obligations we are under to keep Holy the Sabbath, are laid to Heart. And was this the Case, such a Blessed Change, would take Place in this and every Parish, as every real Friend to Mankind, must ardently desire.

BUT if some will not be persuaded, many I hope, will be awakened from what is here laid before them, to some just Sense of the great Sinfulness of polluting the Sabbaths of the LORD ; and become desirous, of being strengthened devoutly to observe them, and assisted in bringing to good Effect, their Holy Purposes.

FROM a sincere Regard to all, who are thus minded, I shall lay before you, 1st. Some Rules necessary to be practised. 2dly. Insist on the great Benefits, respecting this Life, and that which is to come, secured to those

who observe the LORD's Sabbaths. 3dly. Answer the Objections which are loudly, and continually urged by Ignorance and Prophaneness, against paying a suitable Regard to the LORD's own Day.

1st. IF you really design to do your bounden Duty, in keeping Holy the Sabbath; you must arm yourself against all the Temptations you will meet with, to profane and pollute this Day. These Temptations will assault you both from without and from within: Thro' your Friends and Relations, and from your own vile and unbelieving Heart. The former, if they make no Conscience of the Law and Authority of GOD, nor know the worth of their immortal Souls, will be calling upon you to take Part in their Voluptuousness: at least, to join them in sober Recreation; to be satisfied, with a mere complimentary Appearance at the House of GOD's Worship. They will fain persuade you to make a Composition with Him, that if you come to His Church in the Morning, you may look upon it as your right, to spend the rest of the Day, as you please. From such profane Relations, and Friends, you must expect at first, Censure and Opposition; to be very heartily laughed at, for being righteous over much, and better than your Neighbours.

THESE Attacks, will be more, than you are able to bear; unless you make your Prayer unto the GOD of your Life, to rivet upon your Mind, a Sense of the absolute right He has to your Obedience, Fear, and Love; and to the most devout Expressions of them on His own Day.

YOU must beg of GOD, to shew you, in a strong and clear Light, that you are a Thief and Robber, if you go about to defraud Him, of any Part of that Day, He has chosen for his own. You must pray, to be immoveably persuaded, that the Sabbath is not ordained for the Sake of any Good that can redound to the High and Lofty One, who inhabiteth Eternity, from your Devotion----it is not for any Delight, He can receive
from

from such a sinful Worm, whom all the Host of Heaven in Flames of Love adore----that you are commanded, to pray, to hear, and read his Holy Word, and to keep his Sabbaths. No, it is your own Profit, the Good of of your immortal Soul, GOD seeks ; that you may gain the Knowledge of Things that belong to your Peace, without which, under the Form and Fashion of a Man, and possessed of a reasonable Mind, you must have the Heart of a Beast.

YOU are strictly charged to keep the Sabbath, least as our great Christian Poet speaks,

*Thy Folly bound thy Prospect by the Grave ;
All Feeling of Eternity, benumbed ;
Renounced all Intercourse with Heaven ;
By Flesh imprisoned, all, that ought to soar ;
Prone to the Earth, and crawling in the Dust,
Without one great, or Heaven-born Aim ;
Embruted every Faculty divine :
Heart-buried in the Rubbish of the World,
The World, that Gulph of Souls,
Immortal Souls.-----*

LEAST this should be thy sad Condition, you are strictly commanded to observe, a Day, to acquaint yourself with GOD, his Son, his Spirit, and his Gospel.

Now from this true State of the Case, it is evident, what great Injury you are bringing upon yourself, by giving Way to Prophaneness. And when once you are rooted and grounded in this Persuasion, you will boldly reply to every proud Scoffer, and abhor all the Counsel of the ungodly. You will know, that to be singular in keeping the Sabbath, is your bounden Duty ; and by it, you are only *sowing to the Spirit, that of the Spirit you may reap Life Everlasting.*

THE Temptations, from your own carnal Mind, to pollute this Day, if not by seeking your own Pleasure, yet by heartless Attendance on the Worship of GOD ; you must guard against, by earnest Prayer, to receive
every

every Sabbath, with all Thankfulness, as a peculiar Season, hallowed and blessed of GOD. You must confess your own Formality, Coldness, and Indifference: and beg to find yourself in a proper Frame of Mind, suitable to the Holy Day. For as no Man can pray unto God, spiritually, fervently, and effectually, without seeking the promised Help of the Holy Ghost: much less can ye keep a *Day*, holy to the Lord, whilst you trust in your own Strength. Neither is it possible, to avoid speaking your own Words, or finding your own Pleasure, on the Lord's Day; unless you have better Thoughts and Pleasures ministered unto you, by the Grace and Spirit of GOD. Which therefore you must be careful to seek by diligent Prayer, on every Sabbath.

It is, it must be intollerably wearisome to spend the Day in a devout Manner, when no Petitions have been offered up to GOD, to open the Intercourse between Him and the Soul; no Prayer for such bright Discoveries of his own Glory; such Convictions of the Excellency of Holiness, of the Defilement, and dreadful Consequences of Sin; as shall afford abundant Matter, for all the various Exercises of Godliness.

ON the contrary, if you make Conscience to intreat the LORD Almighty, that you maybe enabled to observe his own Day, according to his Commandment; and that you may receive all the Benefit to your Soul, which He designed to bestow on the Faithful, when He blessed the Sabbath-Day, and hallowed it. If you raise your Expectations high, of finding some considerable Support and Establishment added to your Faith; some new Fervours to your Love; some fresh Increase of Power and Strength, to stand against your Enemies; then, the Language of your Soul will be, *This is the Day which the Lord hath made; We will rejoice and be glad in it. O be joyful in the Lord, all ye Lands; serve the Lord with GLADNESS, and come before his Presence with a Song.*

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Do you ask, what peculiar Encouragement there is, to use so much Diligence and Pains to keep the Sabbath, according to the Will of GOD? I answer, many great and most desirable Benefits, are annexed to a conscientious Observance of this Day. The Knowledge of yourself, of the World, and of GOD; which include the most valuable and necessary Points, is only to be attained, by using aright the Sabbath.

SELF-KNOWLEDGE, has been extolled in every Age, as the highest Wisdom. Yet all important, as it is, the Bulk of Mankind, have no other Means of attaining to it, but the Observation of the Sabbath. A perfect Spendthrift, knows as much of his own Affairs, and of his Debts, which multiply Day by Day, as that Man can know of the State of his own immortal Soul, who makes no frequent Pauses, to prove and examine himself. Who can let Weeks, Months, and Years pass, whilst his Business engrosses his Thoughts on common Days, his Pleasures and Amusements on Sundays.

THE Iniquity of his Actions, the Offences of his Tongue, the vile Affections ruling in his Heart, tho' highly provoking to GOD, defiling and ruinous to his Soul, will all be hid from his Eyes.

SUCH a one, will imagine himself, a good sort of a Man, and chargeable with little Guilt, whilst in deed and in truth, his Sins are great and heinous. Nothing of the Evil of his Ways, will he see distinctly enough, either to bewail it before GOD, or to seek for Deliverance from it.

HENCE it is, that so many Thousands live in full Security, saying, *Tush, there shall no Harm happen unto us*, tho' every Threatning in the Bible is in full Force against them. Hence, they will not be persuaded, they are bad enough, to need any Repentance, 'till the whole Multitude of their Iniquities, rise up against them in the next World, and convince them to their Face.

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BUT if you keep the Sabbaths of the LORD, you will be led to recollect the several Passages of each Week. You will be able to trace back the Temper of your Mind from Day to Day ; and by that Means make a timely Discovery, of the Badness of your Spirit, and the Disorders of your Heart. You will take Notice, in how many Instances, alas ! your Discourse, your Tempers and Desires, betrayed a sad Forgetfulness, of your solemn Professions, and contradicted your Prayers.

By this Discovery, you will be led to the Knowledge of yourself, as a poor, guilty, unstable, helpless Creature. You will see your Need of the Blood of Christ, to take away your Sins ; of his Strength and Power to get you the Victory. And by this Acquaintance with yourself, you will return to the Business of the World, after every Sabbath, more humble, more watchful, and more strengthened to overcome, where hitherto you have failed.

AND whilst you are acquiring this most useful Knowledge of your own Weakness, Defilement and Sinfulness, you will gain also the Knowledge of GOD your Saviour. It is gross Ignorance of the Frequency and Multitude of our Offences, which keeps us careless, and Despisers of the Lord JESUS CHRIST. For want of this Knowledge, the far greater Part, live and die with no other than Hearsay Notions of GOD and CHRIST. They hear, He is great in Power, glorious in Holiness, infinite in Wisdom. They hear, that He gave His only begotten Son, to die for Sinners, and that Eternal Life, is promised to them that believe in Him. But what there is in Sin ; why it behoved GOD by whom are all Things, to appoint such a Sacrifice for it ; what is the Excellency of Faith in CHRIST----- all these most important Truths, are not the least laid to Heart. The Cares, or the Pleasures of the World, making them satisfied with *bearing* of these Things, and allowing them to be true, whilst there is no real Acquaintance with them ; no Knowledge of any Thing
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more, than that there is a Report of such a Kind. And this is evident, from an undeniable Fact, that most of those who call themselves, Christians, receive no more present Comfort, nor find any greater Degree of Happiness, in remembering these Scripture Truths, than if they were mere Fable and Romance.

BUT if you keep one Day in seven, as the LORD hath commanded, you will acquaint yourself with that GOD, whom all others in Ignorance worship. You will be sure, He is great in Power, because you will consider the Operations of his Hand, and the Victory He gives you against your Enemies. You will clearly perceive, that He is infinite in Wisdom, by gaining a Knowledge of his Word, of the Method of Salvation contrived by Him, and of the wonderful Ways, by which He hath ever fulfilled his Promises to the obedient, and avenged Himself on his Adversaries. You will have the Witness in yourself, that He is indeed good, and gracious, and of great Mercy; from the Answers of Peace given to your Prayers, the seasonable Supplies to your Wants, and your safe Deliverance from Dangers. The Experience of these Mercies, afresh imprinted on the Memory, by due Recollection every Sabbath, will give you the same irresistible Proof of the Goodness of the LORD, as you have of the Love of an earthly Parent, from his Care constantly expressed for you.

BY this Means, you will attain that Knowledge of GOD, which the Bible declares is eternal Life; begun as a Seed here, but in Heaven unfolding itself more and more, so long as you have your Being.

AGAIN. By serious Self-Examination, (become an habitual Exercise on the Sabbath,) you will find it impossible, for you to be saved, by Virtue of your own Duties, and Services. For your Defects in Love and Zeal to GOD, in fervent Charity towards your Neighbour, will be confessed to be so many; and upon due Recollection, the Workings of silent Envy, and secret Pride,

Pride, so frequent ; the Mixtures of Selfishness, so apparent ; that you will be compelled to go out of yourself ; and despoiled of every proud Conceit of your own Goodness, to fall vile and guilty at the Feet of a crucified Mediator, imploring Pardon, only for his Sake, who suffered the Just for the Unjust, bearing our Sins in his own Body on the Tree.

THE Knowledge of the World, in like Manner, you will attain by keeping the Sabbaths of the LORD. Poor deluded Man, is wont to be as much a Stranger to this, as he is to GOD, or himself. The World, he mistakes, as a Place for Enjoyment, not for Trial, as a Theatre, to make an Appearance on, in Pride and Vanity, not to fight with a truly noble and divine Courage, against the Enemies of GOD, and his own immortal Soul. And tho' GOD is calling upon him in the most alarming Manner, *Be not conformed to this World.-----Whosoever is a Friend of the World, is the Enemy of GOD.* JAM. iv. 4. Yet Man, deaf to the Words of this Book, devotes himself to all the Interests, Pleasures, and Enjoyments of the World, as if there was no Danger, nor Prohibition ; he is engrossed in seeking after them, as the Gentiles which know not GOD.

NOR can it prove otherwise, unless Men will retire from Noise and Company, calmly to consider the real Nature of Things, and get Instruction in Righteousness.

THIS necessary Retirement, by keeping the Sabbaths of GOD, you will secure : and by spending them in reading his enlightening Scriptures, and such Authors only, as write on the same Plan ; your Eyes will be fully opened to perceive, what the World is : a Place, you are continued in, not for the sake of any Thing it can give you : not to be a rich Man, a learned Man, or a Voluptuary ; but only to have Time and Space, to conquer and obtain Eternal Salvation.

EVERY returning Sabbath, when duly observed, will repeat, impress, inforce, with increasing Evidence and Power,

Power, this Fundamental Truth. Till at length it will wholly govern you, in your Shop, and in your Service, your Trade, and Merchandize.

AND this suggests the next great Advantage you will reap from keeping the Sabbath holy, it will enable you to live in all Honesty, and good Conscience.

LOUD, and continual are the Complaints in every Place, to the Reproach of our Christian Name, that Fraud, Deceit, and Lying, go not out of our Streets. And so strong are the Temptations from Self-interest, and Self-love, that a most sagacious Observer on the Manners of Men, pronounced it a general Rule, *that as a Nail sticketh fast between the Joinings of the Stones, so doth Sin stick fast, between buying and selling.* ECCLES. xxvii. 2. A thirst after Money, an insatiable Greediness for Gain, must necessarily grow out of the continual Praises, which are heard of Wealth, and its Possessors; and from the Advantages it gives a Man at the Market, and on the Exchange. And hence worldly Lusts gain such Dominion, as nothing can restrain them, from using every Method, not subject to the Lash of the Law, to get Money, and grow rich.

LITTLE Breaches of the Rule of Honesty, will first be connived at, then greater; till at length Conscience is laid waste, and all that is profitable, will be esteemed lawful. Nay, the very Notion of forgoing Gain for Conscience Sake, will be laughed at, as imaginary.

NOT so will it be with you, if you faithfully observe the Lord's Sabbaths. You will be governed too by your *own Interest*. But then knowing the Salvation of your Soul, to be your best Interest, and infinitely your richest Gain; you will feel a strong Check, keeping you within the Compass of your Duty, you will feel the Powers of the World to come, counteracting inordinate Affection, and Covetousness. And tho' *tempted* to do dishonestly, for the Sake of getting Money, or to Support a sinking Trade; this Reply

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will be powerful and sufficient, *What shall I be profited, if I gain the whole World, and lose my own Soul?*

THUS by keeping the Sabbath, you will be enabled to glorify GOD, by being honest and sincere in your Business; by escaping the Guilt of those Frauds, which wound, and defile the Souls of most Men in Trade. Every Sabbath will renew your Strength, and prove a blessed Earnest unto you, of that Time, when you will be no more exposed to such severe Trials; no more in Danger of making Ship-wreck of Faith, and a good Conscience, for present Convenience and Advantage. According to the Course of Things, your inflexible Honesty, will greatly recommend you in the Way of Business; and Numbers will be glad to deal, where by Experience, and the Testimony of many Witnesses, no Fraud will be practised upon them; nor *unreasonable Gain*, so much as sought after.

BUT be this, as it may; when you conscientiously observe the Lord's Day, you are interested in many Promises, which respect this World, as well as that which is to come. This is one principal Part of, and naturally leads, to a godly Life. Which Life, is Heir to that All-sufficient Promise. Ps. lxxxiv. v. 11. *For the Lord GOD, is a Sun, and a Shield; the Lord will give Grace and Glory---and no good Thing will He withhold from them that lead a godly Life.*

THE same Promise of GOD's peculiar Love in this World, is expressed. ISA. v. 8. 14. For there it is declared, that if the Sabbath, be a Delight to you, esteemed the Holy of the Lord, honourable, and all forbidden Practices are laid aside, that you may honour GOD on that Day. Then saith the LORD Almighty, *I will cause Thee to ride on the High Places of the Earth.* In other Words, I will deliver Thee, from Distresses, Necessities and Afflictions, (as far as it may be for thy Good,) you shall be carried triumphant over them. *And feed Thee with the Heritage of Jacob,* I will give Thee, what he received from me, to eat in Plenty, and
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be satisfied ; and to partake of my Bounty, with respect to temporal, no less than spiritual Mercies.

THE Truth of these Promises, hath been confirmed, like all the rest, which are found in the Bible, by Fact and Experience.

SEVERAL in great Business and high Employment in our own Nation, have left their Testimony on Record, that the more carefully, and piously they observed the Lord's Day, the better they succeeded, in what with a good Conscience, they undertook.

IT is very memorable, concerning the Great *Elizabeth*, whose Reign was so remarkably blessed with the Care and Protection of JEHOVAH ; that upon her coming to the Throne, she began her Government, with a very strict Command, to observe the Lord's Day. The Words of this Injunction, are worthy to be preserved, and written in Letters of Gold in all our Churches.

‘ ALL the Queen's Faithful Subjects, shall from henceforth celebrate, and keep Holy this Day, according to GOD's Holy Will and Pleasure, i. e. In hearing the Word read and taught, in Private, and Public Prayers, in Acknowledgment of their Offences, and the Amendment of the same ; in often receiving the Communion of the Body and Blood of CHRIST ; using all Soberness and godly Conversation.’

IN this solemn Manner, the Honour of the LORD GOD was secured in our Nation ; and therefore one single Island, tho' harbouring a Nest of Vipers in its Bosom, a most numerous, Popish Faction, stood out against the Subtlety and Violence of Kingdoms combined against it.

THE Lord Chief Justice *Hale*, one of the first Ornaments to his Profession, transmitted it in Print to his Children, that he was persuaded he owed much of his Success and Renown, to his most exemplary Observation of this Holy Day.

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THE Time would fail me, to mention all the Cloud of Witnesses, who have declared, that the good Order of their Families ; the Sobriety, Diligence, and Dutifulness of their Children ; the many unexpected Friends and Advantages they have met with ; were evident Tokens of GOD's Fatherly Care towards them, whilst they were Keeping his Sabbaths.

INDEED, 'till GOD's Truth is suffered to fail, every one that seeks His Kingdom and Righteousness in the first Place, shall have Food convenient for him ; and such Circumstances in Life, as, upon the Whole, are the very best for him to be in.

You have now, in one View before you, the several strong Reasons, which oblige every Man to keep Holy the Lord's Day ; and the great Blessings he will receive from this Christian Practice. I know of nothing that can be added on the Subject, unless it be 1st. An Answer to the Objections, which Ignorance and Profaneness so loudly make against Keeping the Sabbath in this exemplary Manner. 2dly. An Application of the Whole to the Heart and Conscience.

1. IT is commonly pleaded in Excuse for Profaning the Sabbath ; that it is very hard, that those, who are obliged to follow their Business so closely for six Days in the Week, should not have Liberty to indulge themselves ; that *they* should be refrained from relaxing in Parties of Pleasure, and in visiting, who are confined to a Shop, or a Town, all the Week beside ; when their ceasing from their Work, and from their Labour, will allow them to take their Pleasure. This, it is said, is a Piece of Self-Denial, irksome to submit to.

THAT it is a Piece of Self-Denial, at first, and a very great one too, I grant. But, what is Religion, but Self-Denial exercised in various Instances. Can a Man be chaste, without doing Violence to the lewd Desires natural to the Human Heart ? Or can he be honest, without opposing strong Temptations to be otherwise ? Can we obey GOD rather than Man, without the

the pain of mortifying our Love of Praise? *Is the Right Hand that offends*, some Sin appearing as necessary to our Welfare, as the Right Hand is to defend the Body, to be spared? or *the Right Eye*, some evil Lust, as much delighted in, as the Organ of Sight, to be gratified, because it is the severest Act of Self-Denial, to cut the one off, or to pluck out the other?

FURTHER, when you make this Objection, take Notice, in what Instances are you denying the Inclinations of a Heart, which the Mouth of the LORD, hath pronounced, to be desperately wicked? What do you do for Him, which you would not do, if there was no GOD?

Do not say, you neither rob, nor steal, for his Sake? Because the Prison, and the Gallows, tie up your Hands, from such Practices. Do not say, you are quiet and inoffensive, for Conscience towards GOD, if you break his Sabbaths. No, it is because you love Peace, rather than Broils and Quarrels. Do not fancy you are no Drunkard or Fornicator, out of regard to the Authority of GOD, if yet you are profane. No, it is, because you would keep your Character and avoid Disease. Do not imagine, your Appearance at Church once a Day, whilst afterwards you find your own Pleasure, is a Proof that the Fear of GOD is in you. For this you may do, to keep a fair Name, and even to pacify Conscience, accusing for the habitual Commission of Sin.

IN short, you will find it impossible, to prove, that you deny yourself in any one Desire, or perform a single Duty, out of regard to GOD, whilst you continue a Profaner of his Sabbaths. And for my own Part, I have ever found, a lawless Spirit with respect to GOD, in every one, who would for his own Convenience, or Pleasure, pollute his Holy Day.

IN Proof of this, make the following Experiment. If you say, it is indeed so hard a Thing, not to have one Day in seven, to take your own Pleasure in, and
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to cease from your Business. Take then, one out of six. On that Day, in which you are allowed, without Offence against the Law of your GOD; travel, visit your Friends, thus relax and please yourself. No, this you refuse; you choose rather to be diligent in your Trade.

Now can there be a plainer Demonstration than this, that you despise, utterly despise GOD, and his Law. Since you think it very hard, you may not be allowed to rob GOD, of His Day, for your own Pleasure; whilst to avoid this Hardship, you will give up nothing of your Application to Business, and from getting Gain, for yourself.

IF the same Objection is made, by Journeymen, and Apprentices, who have no Day their own; let them remember, they can Toil and Labour, without murmuring, six Days for their earthly Masters, receiving only their poor Pittance of Wages; how much more should they rejoice and be glad, to serve Him one Day only out of seven, who will reward them that love Him, with a Crown of Life, a Kingdom of Glory.

I HAVE considered this very common Objection thus far, as if the conscientious Observance of the Sabbath, was always to be an ungrateful Act of Self-Denial.

BUT this is by no Means, the Case, when once, the Heart is whole with GOD, and determined to hearken to the Voice of his Word. It is Blasphemy, to suppose, the Profaners of the Sabbath, have any Pleasure, and Delight equal to what those enjoy, who faithfully and devoutly observe it. Upon the Comparison, the Advantage, in Point of present Satisfaction, and Comfort, will evidently appear to be on the Side, of the Faithful, whether they be rich, or poor.

THE rich, who profane the Sabbaths of the LORD, have no better Pleasure, (tho' so dearly bought, by actual Rebellion against GOD,) than hearing, or telling some new Thing; indulging themselves and their Acquaintance

quaintance in Softness, and Luxury. But what is there in this, worthy to be named with the Enjoyments of the Rich, who employ the Day as the LORD hath appointed.

THEY enter their Closet, and shut their Door, excluding the World, its Interests, and its Cares. They find their Hopes enlarging themselves beyond the Bounds of Time, and full of Immortality. JEHOVAH, the Worship of the whole Host of Heaven, gives them Audience. The Throne of Grace is before them. And JESUS sitting at the Right Hand of GOD, making Intercession for them. Here they unburthen, every Trouble, that afflicts their Conscience; they pour out, as before their most tender Father, all their Complaints; they lay every Grief and Fear before Him, persisting to knock, till the Door of Mercy is opened to them; and to ask, 'till they have obtained.

THUS prepared, they come to worship GOD in the great Congregation, and their Hearts are warmed with a lively Sense, of his Presence in the Church.

ON these blessed Days, they have more abundant Communion with the Father, and with his Son JESUS CHRIST; and, like Abraham, the Friend of GOD, they command their Family; teaching them to know the Majesty of GOD, that He is worthy to be feared and loved, and He alone, with the whole Heart.

AFTER such holy Exercises, they go to their Rest; sweetly conscious they are pure from the Blood, both of their Children, and their Servants; and that if Profaneness abides in either of them, it is entirely their own Iniquity.

Now to suppose, that their Hearts, who thus observe the Sabbath, feel not more Pleasure, than the Profane, is Blasphemy, in a high Degree. It is, in fact, to affirm, that Eating and Drinking to pamper the Appetite, together with the poor, vain Conversation of Men, who are ignorant of Things which are excellent, can more satisfy the Soul, than a View of the Glory of GOD,
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and a familiar Intercourse with Him, in the Exercise of Prayer, Praise, and Love unfeigned.

BUT if you are poor ; your Pleasure, in profaning the Sabbath, will be, to ramble about from Place to Place ; to sit in an Alehouse, to dine at an Ordinary, amidst those, whose Mouths are full of Cursing and Swearing ; or at best, to visit your Friends and Acquaintance. As forgetful of GOD, in the mean time, as insensible of his Love, and as ignorant of the Mercies of Redemption, as the Indians in the Woods.

AND what is there in all this, comparable to the Pleasures and Benefits you will enjoy, tho' the poorest amongst the People, by Keeping the Sabbaths of the LORD ? Upon humble Confession of your Sins, you will receive, an Increase of the *Peace of God, which passeth all Understanding*. Upon Prayer, and reading, or hearing GOD's Word, you will be endued with Patience. Super-natural Strength and Confidence will be put into your Soul, to bear up under the thousand Hardships, which you endure.

A LIVELY Apprehension of the Love of GOD to you, in CHRIST JESUS ; and of his precious Promises, that *He hath chosen the Poor of this World*, i. e. the godly, honest, and believing Poor, *rich in Faith, and Heirs of the Kingdom* ; a lively Apprehension of this Kind by Faith, will give every one of you, my dear Brethren, of low Degree, strong Consolation. Like the Light of the Sun, it will dispell, those many distressing Fears, which always do, and must, more or less, torment the Poor, who have not the Knowledge and the Love of GOD. For what Comfort can any poor labouring Man have before him, who lives in Sin and Ignorance ; as he must do, if he profanes the Sabbath ? What can be his Hope ? Not any great Gain, to beguile his hard Labour, and sweeten the Bitterness of Servitude. Not even so much, as the Reward of eating his own Bread, in old Age, or wearing his own Raiment. In short, nothing is before the poor Day-labouring

labouring Man, on Earth, but the cold Comfort of some Parish-House ; where, perchance, he may see himself defrauded of somewhat of that Provision, Public Charity hath prepared for him ; and treated, as if he was no better than a dead Burden, irksome in his Continuance amongst those, who have grown rich, by the Strength of his Arm, tho' it is now unnerved ; and by the Sweat of his Brow, tho' now furrowed by the Wrinkles of Age.

THUS circumstanced, what Marvel, that so many of the Poor, who are profane, and of Course, Strangers to the Promises of the Covenant, and the all-sufficient Consolations that are in CHRIST ; what Marvel, I say, that they seek to forget their wretched Condition, by Draughts of Intemperance, by Drunkenness, by all manner of Lewdness ; that pressed continually with the Fears of Want, which is just at their Doors, they lie, they cheat ; or comparing the necessitous Condition, they were born to, with those, who are full and at ease, in desperate Resentment of that Condition, they grow fearless of the Sword of Justice ; a Nuisance and Terror to the Community.

CAN better Things reasonably be expected from the Poor, wretched as they must be in this World, if not abounding in the Hope of a better ?

REMEMBER *the Sabbath-Day to Keep it Holy*, My poor Brother or Sister, whose destitute Condition, every merciful Heart must pity, and this Hope shall fill your Soul. The only Book in the World, which can give Patience and Comfort to the Poor, is the Bible, which you will read or hear on the Lord's Day. This will teach you, that you are not the less beloved of GOD, because of your Necessities, since, *those of whom the World was not worthy*, you find, HEB. xi. 37. *wandered about in Sheep-skins and Goat-skins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented.* You will behold, without Envy

and Repining, the Abundance of many around you, whilst Poverty will allow you no more, than a Mortel of Bread, and a Cup of cold Water, duly affected by the Declaration of the *greater Poverty* the Saviour bore; that thro' his Poverty, you might become rich, be a Child of GOD, an Heir of Glory. You will know how to hunger and to suffer Want, without Misery, remembering that whilst Foxes of the Earth have Holes, and the Birds of the Air have Nests, the Son of Man had not where to lay his Head.

THE painful Swellings, which the Pride of others will raise in your own proud Heart, by despising and disdaining you, will subside, by being persuaded of the Truth of that mysterious Fact, that GOD, when manifest in the Flesh to purchase the Church with his own Blood, was buffeted, spit upon, and crucified. In this Manner doth the Knowledge of the Bible, in a Way peculiar to itself, but powerful in Operation, remove all tormenting Suspicions, lest GOD's Love should be withdrawn.

AND this sharpest Sting of Poverty itself, is blunted, by being put in constant Remembrance, that Prophets, Apostles, and the Son of GOD, passed the Time of their sojourning on Earth, in a Condition, as mean, as low, as despicable in the Judgment of them that knew not GOD, as that, in which you are placed yourself; and therefore you are justly required to be content therewith.

FURTHER. By hearing or reading the Everlasting Word of GOD, you will meet with many strong Declarations, of GOD's peculiar Love to the Honest, and the Godly Poor: *that when such Cry, the Lord beareth them: that to them the Gospel is preached: that God hath chosen the base Things of the World, and the Things that are despised, hath God chosen, yea Things which are not.* i.e. Persons so exceedingly mean and poor, that in the Account of worldly Pride, they are looked upon

upon as nothing. PSAL. xxxiv. 6. MATT. xi. 5. 1 COR. i. 28. you will hear the Judge of Quick and Dead, addressing Himself thus to you; *I know thy Works, and Tribulation, and Poverty, but thou art rich.* REV. ii. 9.

THE Conclusions, you will draw from all these most comfortable Declarations, will quiet and support you under all your Troubles. With respect to yourself, the Gospel shall have, the glorious Effect ascribed to it. Is. xxix. 19. It shall enable *the Poor among Men to rejoice in the Holy One of Israel*; and tho' destitute of the Enjoyments of Life, and in this Sense, *you have nothing*; yet in respect of Peace and Comfort, *you will possess all Things.* 2. COR. vi, 10.

IT remains, in the last Place, that I apply the Whole, to Rich and Poor.

IF you, who have been reading the Arguments urged above for keeping Holy the LORD's Day; employ Servants and Workmen under you, permit me to put you in remembrance, that by this means, your influence makes you, in a more extensive degree, either a Worker together with GOD; or oh! sad Alternative, an Agent and Factor for the Devil.

IF your poorer Neighbours, and your Servants know you conscientiously twice attend the Worship of GOD, on the Sabbath, and observe it devoutly at Home; you will leave them no manner of Countenance, or Shelter for their own Profaneness. Your living Example will abett and enforce the dead Letter of the Law of the Land. You will prove each of you, a most friendly and powerful Monitor, to stir up poor ignorant and sinful Creatures, to seek after GOD, for Pardon and Life. In the Great Day, when the Influence of good, no less than the Infection of bad Example, shall be laid open, in all their wide spreading Effects; many will be found to confess, they were roused from a profane Stupidity, by observing how their richer Neighbours spent the LORD's Day; and by them were led to go and do likewise.

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AND if to such Example, you add a Word of Advice to your Servants, and Workmen, as Opportunity offers ; many who set at nought their Teacher's Exhortation, yea, the Words of the most High GOD, will listen to your Admonition, and may, perhaps, be blessed thro' it.

ON the contrary, if your Servants, or your poor Neighbours, behold your Custom and Practice the reverse of all this ; if they know you travel on the LORD's Day, not for the Good of Soul or Body, but for Convenience or Diversiſion ; if they see you prefer Buſineſs, or mere Idleneſs to coming to Church, and the Exerciſes of Godlineſs ; hear every Week, that profane Mirth and Drinking with your Friends, was actually engaging you, when Prayers, Supplications, and Interceſſions, with Thankſgivings, were offering up to GOD in your own Pariſh Church. By ſuch a Behaviour, you will ſtrengthen the Hands, and harden the Hearts, and vaſtly increaſe, to the Reproach of your Maker and Judge, the Number of ſwearing, curſing, lying, lewd, drunken, and ungodly Poor ; who have nothing but Miſery and Deſtruction in their Ways, and the Way of Peace, have they not known.

THESE miſerable Objects, will, and actually do reply, when urged to keep Holy the LORD's own Day, that they tread in your Steps, and Copy your Example.

THEY hold faſt their hideous, horrible Choice, of damnable Profaneſs and Ignorance, ſaying again and again, Was it ſo great a Sin to pollute the Sabbaths of the LORD ; our Maſters, and our Gentlemen, who know better than we, would not live in the Practice of it.

NOW tho' you know, this Plea, has no force in it, tho' you know, the Poor can no more be ſheltered or excuſed in their Profaneſs, by ſaying they do, as you do ; than if they were to follow you, ſhould you be mad enough to engage in Rebellion againſt the Government,

ment; yet in Fact, many live and die in this Mistake, and are lost for ever.

O PITY therefore the Poor, and never mislead them, that are looking to you, (tho' they should not be so,) by your Example: and as you would not be found accessory to the Damnation of others, and Partakers of the Guilt of their Iniquities, added to your own; exercise yourself in all Manner of Godliness, both in public and private, on the LORD's own Day.

To you that are Servants and Workmen, I will add only a few Words.

Do you abound so with present Conveniencies and Comforts? are you, so free from Troubles, so far out of the reach of Want, as not to stand in need of GOD's Care for you, and of his Comforts, which are only to be enjoyed thro' the Knowledge and Love of Him? that any of you, by breaking his Sabbaths, should say unto Him, Depart from us; What have we to do with Thee? That instead of seeking his Strength and his Face, One Day in Seven, you should any of you spend it, in the vile Slavery of Sin, and Satan?

Is your Lot, on this Side the Grave, so easy and desirable, as to render the Thoughts of Everlasting Rest, irksome? or your Possessions here below, so ample, you need not to look for an Inheritance in Heaven?

IF this is not the Case with you, but in each Instance, the direct contrary, come to thyself, then, ungodly poor Man, or Woman. Deal not so madly. What! will you be content, to be a Drudge, a Slave, in the lowest, hardest Condition here, without coveting earnestly, Ease, and Glory hereafter? Will you love Darkness rather than Light, be ignorant, as a Brute, all the Days of thy Life, of GOD and CHRIST, and then, for that wilful, and chosen Ignorance, be separated for ever from GOD. Is this thy Resolution? Is this thy last Choice? Surely it cannot be.

YET

YET take Notice, the Word of the living GOD is positive, it altereth not. It declares wherever Profaneness is found, the Wrath of GOD abides. If it is covered with Poverty and Rags, it no more ceases to be a damnable Sin, than when cloath'd in purple and fine Linen. The Enmity of the Mind to GOD, is the same accursed Thing, whether found in great Men, and in rich Men, or in the bond Man, and the mean Man. REV. vi. 15.

THE Scripture saith again, GAL. vi, 7, 8. *Be not deceived, GOD is not mocked, for that which a Man Soweth, that also shall he Reap.* Every Year your own Eyes behold the Husbandman reaping the Fruits of the Earth, exactly according to the different Kinds of Seed, he has sown; whether it be Wheat, or any other Grain: And it makes no manner of Difference, whether the Hand of a King or a Beggar, cast the Seed into the Ground.

So, with regard to the Eternal World, to which this present one bears the same Relation, as the Seed-Time to the Harvest; the Man, whether he be rich or poor, learned, as Books can make him, or no Scholar; if he soweth to the Flesh, in his Aims and Designs, his Practices and Principles, he is altogether selfish and ungodly, *He shall of the Flesh reap Corruption*; the bitter rotten Fruit of such a Seed, shall be Destruction. But, *He that soweth to the Spirit*, by seeking GOD and his Glory in the first Place; by praying to Him, giving Him Thanks; by honouring His Word, His Son, and His Sabbaths, in whatever Condition he is found; whether amongst Princes or Nobles; Gentlemen or Tradesmen; amongst Servants, or in a Parish-House; shall of the Spirit, reap Life Everlasting: And with GOD there is no Respect of Persons.

E R R A T A.

- Page 5, last Line, *read*, are weary of it, they say,
P. 6, the 4th Line from the Bottom, *read*, I answer, Secondly, it is
that you may obtain
P. 9, l. 28, *dele* Now, *and read*, Thirdly, If this Command is despised;
P. 10, l. 8, *read*, to strengthen
P. 11, l. 14, *read*, I will proceed to shew you, Fourthly, the
P. 12, l. 15, *read*, desperately
P. 15, l. last but one, *read*, of such a Mercy. He will be
P. 19, l. 6, *read*, the Knowledge of the Things
— —, l. 16, *read*, *and groveling in the Dust*,
— —, l. 23, *dele* to acquaint, *and read*, for acquainting yourself
P. 20, l. 16, *read*, intolerably
P. 22, l. 3, from the Bottom, *read*, make them satisfied



